

room chamber. The plants are caged by placing a 500 ml plastic bottle upside down over the plant with the neck of the bottle firmly placed in the soil in a pot and the base cut open and covered with a fine nylon mesh to permit aeration, reduce condensation inside and prevent insect escape. RFB are placed on each treated plant in the cage. Plants are treated with a suspension of *E. coli* AB309-105 harbouring the pGBNJ001 plasmids or pGN29 plasmid. Different quantities of bacteria are applied to the plants: for instance 66, 22, and 7 units, where one unit is defined as 10^9 bacterial cells in 1 ml of a bacterial suspension at optical density value of 1 at 600 nm wavelength. In each case, a total volume of between 1 and 10 ml is sprayed on the plant with the aid of a vaporizer. One plant is used per treatment in this trial. The number of survivors are counted and the weight of each survivor recorded.

[0366] Spraying plants with a suspension of *E. coli* bacterial strain AB309-105 expressing target dsRNA from pGBNJ003 led to a dramatic increase in insect mortality when compared to pGN29 control. These experiments show that double-stranded RNA corresponding to an insect gene target sequence produced in either wild-type or RNaseIII-deficient bacterial expression systems is toxic towards the insect in terms of substantial increases in insect mortality and growth/development delay for larval survivors. It is also clear from these experiments that an exemplification is provided for the effective protection of plants/crops from insect damage by the use of a spray of a formulation consisting of bacteria expressing double-stranded RNA corresponding to an insect gene target.

Example 10

Myzus persicae (Green Peach Aphid)

a. Cloning *Myzus persicae* Partial Sequences

[0367] High quality, intact RNA was isolated from nymphs of *Myzus persicae* (green peach aphid; source: Dr. Rachel Down, Insect & Pathogen Interactions, Central Science Laboratory, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ, UK) using TRIzol Reagent (Cat. Nr. 15596-026/15596-018, Invitrogen, Rockville, Md., USA) following the manufacturer's instructions. Genomic DNA present in the RNA preparation was removed by DNase treatment following the manufacturer's instructions (Cat. Nr. 1700, Promega). cDNA was generated using a commercially available kit (SuperScript™ III Reverse Transcriptase, Cat. Nr. 18080044, Invitrogen, Rockville, Md., USA) following the manufacturer's instructions.

[0368] To isolate cDNA sequences comprising a portion of the MP001, MP002, MP010, MP016 and MP027 genes, a series of PCR reactions with degenerate primers were performed using Amplitaq Gold (Cat. Nr. N8080240, Applied Biosystems) following the manufacturer's instructions.

[0369] The sequences of the degenerate primers used for amplification of each of the genes are given in Table 2-MP. These primers were used in respective PCR reactions with the following conditions: for MP001, MP002 and MP016, 10 minutes at 95° C., followed by 40 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 1 minute at 50° C. and 1 minute 30 seconds at 72° C., followed by 7 minutes at 72° C.; for MP027, a touchdown program was used: 10 minutes at 95° C., followed by 10 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 40 seconds at 60° C. with a decrease in temperature of 1° C. per cycle and 1 minute 10 seconds at 72° C., followed by 30 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 40 seconds at 50° C. and 1 minute 10 seconds at 72° C.,

followed by 7 minutes at 72° C.; for MP010, 10 minutes at 95° C., followed by 40 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 1 minute at 54° C. and 3 minutes at 72° C., followed by 7 minutes at 72° C. The resulting PCR fragments were analyzed on agarose gel, purified (QIAquick Gel Extraction kit, Cat. Nr. 28706, Qiagen), cloned into the pCR8/GW/TOPO vector (Cat. Nr. K2500-20, Invitrogen), and sequenced. The sequences of the resulting PCR products are represented by the respective SEQ ID NO:s as given in Table 2-MP and are referred to as the partial sequences. The corresponding partial amino acid sequences are represented by the respective SEQ ID NO:s as given in Table 3-MP.

B. dsRNA Production of *Myzus persicae* Genes

[0370] dsRNA was synthesized in milligram amounts using the commercially available kit T7 Ribomax™ Express RNAi System (Cat. Nr. P1700, Promega). First two separate single 5' T7 RNA polymerase promoter templates were generated in two separate PCR reactions, each reaction containing the target sequence in a different orientation relative to the T7 promoter.

[0371] For each of the target genes, the sense T7 template was generated using specific T7 forward and specific reverse primers. The sequences of the respective primers for amplifying the sense template for each of the target genes are given in Table 8-MP. A touchdown PCR was performed as follows: 1 minute at 95° C., followed by 20 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 30 seconds at 55° C. (for MP001, MP002, MP016, MP027 and gfp) or 30 seconds at 50° C. (for MP010) with a decrease in temperature of 0.5° C. per cycle and 1 minute at 72° C., followed by 15 cycles of 30 seconds at 95° C., 30 seconds at 45° C. and 1 minute at 72° C. followed by 10 minutes at 72° C. The anti-sense T7 template was generated using specific forward and specific T7 reverse primers in a PCR reaction with the same conditions as described above. The sequences of the respective primers for amplifying the anti-sense template for each of the target genes are given in Table 8-MP. The resulting PCR products were analyzed on agarose gel and purified by PCR purification kit (Qiaquick PCR Purification Kit, Cat. Nr. 28106, Qiagen) and NaClO₄ precipitation. The generated T7 forward and reverse templates were mixed to be transcribed and the resulting RNA strands were annealed, DNase and RNase treated, and purified by sodium acetate, following the manufacturer's instructions. The sense strand of the resulting dsRNA for each of the target genes is given in Table 8-MP.

C. Laboratory Trials to Test dsRNA Targets Using Liquid Artificial Diet for Activity Against *Myzus persicae*

[0372] Liquid artificial diet for the green peach aphid, *Myzus persicae*, was prepared based on the diet suitable for pea aphids (*Acyrtosiphon pisum*), as described by Febvay et al. (1988) [Influence of the amino acid balance on the improvement of an artificial diet for a biotype of *Acyrtosiphon pisum* (Homoptera: Aphididae). *Can. J. Zool.* 66: 2449-2453], but with some modifications. The amino acids component of the diet was prepared as follows: in mg/100 ml, alanine 178.71, beta-alanine 6.22, arginine 244.9, asparagine 298.55, aspartic acid 88.25, cysteine 29.59, glutamic acid 149.36, glutamine 445.61, glycine 166.56, histidine 136.02, isoleucine 164.75, leucine 231.56, lysine hydrochloride 351.09, methionine 72.35, ornithine (HCl) 9.41, phenylalanine